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Review of the problem of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome in all its aspects

Note verbale dated 10 October 2000 from the Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Secretariat and has the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Ouagadougou Declaration, which was adopted at the end of the 5th Pan-African Conference, held at Ouagadougou from 21 to 25 September 2000, under the auspices of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso would like the aforementioned document to be issued as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda item 179.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 10 October 2000 from the Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

5th Pan African Conference of Red Cross and Red Cresent Societies

Ouagadougou Declaration

[Original: English]

The 5th Pan African Conference was convened in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 21 to 25 September 2000 with delegates from 52 African National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in attendance,

Under the theme of
"The Power of Humanity - Building a Healthy Future"

The Conference focused on the key issues of

- The African Red Cross/Red Crescent Health Initiative (ARCHI 2010);
- Food security

The Conference recognized the achievements since the last Pan African Conference in Kampala. It furthermore noted the enormous challenges posed by the worsening health situation especially related to the dramatic HIV/AIDS pandemic and its far-reaching consequences, as well as the deteriorating food security situation in Africa.

COMMITMENTS

In accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its humanitarian mission, and their dedication to working as the International Federation in Africa, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of Africa commit to:

I. Making a major difference to the health of vulnerable people in Africa by adopting and implementing the ARCHI 2010 strategy;

II. Responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic as an unprecedented humanitarian and development disaster in Africa, by massively scaling up their response in terms of advocacy, prevention, care and mitigation;

III. Making food security a strategic priority for this decade, recognizing that food insecurity is directly linked to a number of root causes, including poverty, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the worsening debt crisis and armed conflict;

IV. Building up National Society capacities for improved management, coaching and support of their volunteers and branch networks.

PLAN OF ACTION

Within the framework of Strategy 2010 and to the extent of their capacities, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Africa commit to the following plan of action.

ON HEALTH

- Contributing to improved health and care in communities, including those affected by conflict and disaster;
- Implementing focused Red Cross and Red Crescent health programmes through the agreed Pan African health strategy ARCHI 2010;
- Strengthening the operational capacities and expanding the network of qualified people and branches to enable them to scale up programmes to make a major difference in the health of vulnerable people;
- Promoting healthy behaviours, advocating for appropriate government policies and increasing the international community's awareness of Africa's priority health problems;
- Monitoring and evaluating achievements and continuously improving performance in public health programmes;
- Developing, adapting and using tool kits and application materials to ensure accurate information is provided at the community level;
- Complementing services by working in partnerships with communities, Ministries of Health, UN agencies, and other national and international organizations.

ON HIV/AIDS

- Advocating forcefully for an urgent and adequate international response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in terms of prevention, treatment and care;
- Calling for a comprehensive and co-ordinated strategy from communities, governments, national and international organizations and the private sector for continent-wide support to awareness and prevention campaigns and access to treatment and care for people living with HIV/AIDS;
- Breaking the silence by talking openly amongst themselves and to others about sexual behaviour and reproductive health ;
- Lobbying and supporting governments to prioritize HIV/AIDS and to take appropriate action; preventing discrimination and avoiding stigmatisation of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).
- Actively involving PLWHA in their work;
- Advocating for increased access to affordable drugs and the basic health infrastructure required to deliver the drugs needed to improve the lives of PLWHA;

- Contributing to behavioural changes on a large scale in the communities of Africa by using all existing means to spread simple, culturally sensitive, messages around abstinence, fidelity and use of condoms;

- Making the RC/RC a better home for PLWHA by promoting and protecting their rights and human dignity, both in the organization and outside;

- Training family members in basic care, first-aid and psycho-social support by building on existing community support systems and facilitating access to available external resources;

- Strongly advocating for increased support for orphans and providing care within existing capacities and available resources;

- Participating in the HIV/AIDS partnerships and debates at all levels, aiming to improve their advocacy and learning;

- Exploring possibilities of contributing to the prevention of mother to child transmission;

- Including HIV/AIDS in all their programmes;

- Continuing to develop strategic plans as well as detailed annual plans of action;

- Calling upon their International Federation to urgently launch an appeal to support their country plans and co-ordinate subsequent action.

ON FOOD SECURITY

- Using the draft position paper with amendments as a basis for a process that will define both strategic directions and action plans for this decade;

- Developing in each National Society a specific analysis and approach and areas of focus for improving food security; working within existing government food security policies. Should these not exist, advocating to their governments to create them;

- Systematically incorporating food security planning into all Red Cross/ Red Crescent disaster preparedness and response programmes;

- Applying lessons learnt from the ARCHI 2010 process to food security programming;

- Using Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) tools for defining and planning to respond to food insecurity;

- With the support of the Federation, the ICRC, participating National Societies, governments, UN agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders, sharing experiences and developing strong partnerships for food security including household food security;

- When designing emergency programmes, linking relief and development through capacity building initiatives;

- Always involving beneficiaries and enhancing local coping strategies, including local food production systems and, as much as possible, use of local resources, e.g. locally adapted seeds;

- Participating in early warning systems and advocating for their establishment where they do not exist;

- Giving consideration to developing more innovative responses, including cash-based interventions;

- Taking gender issues into consideration in all food security activities and advocating for women's rights, in particular to land access, land tenure and credit;

- Developing activities for the improvement of the environment, in particular reforestation and water conservation;

- Developing food security programming with a measurable impact through appropriate targeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;

- Asking donors to allocate 10% of their emergency relief budgets to African National Societies to meet their overhead costs.

ON VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

- Actively supporting the Work Plan on Volunteering developed by the Federation Secretariat in follow-up to the International Conference;

- Developing clear recruitment strategies, adopting coaching systems better adapted to the needs of volunteers as well as developing appropriate pedagogic tools;

- Making use of cultural and traditional values which facilitate recruitment and management of volunteers;

- Implementing programmes that will contribute to mobilizing volunteers, promoting their personal development and, through the Power of Humanity, reinforcing their commitment to the Red Cross and Red Crescent;

- Developing a system and finding creative solutions to motivate volunteers, in conformity with the Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Ouagadougou, 25 September, 2000